

DAVID VITTER
LOUISIANA

DEPUTY WHIP

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Environment and Public Works

Foreign Relations

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Special Committee on Aging

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

WASHINGTON, D.C.
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE SH-516
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4623
FAX: (202) 228-5061

BATON ROUGE
858 CONVENTION STREET
BATON ROUGE, LA 70802
(225) 383-0331
FAX: (225) 383-0952

Website with E-Mail Access:
vitter.senate.gov

VIA FACSIMILE
IMMEDIATE ATTENTION REQUESTED

June 14, 2007

Honorable Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor, State of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

Dear Governor:

I look forward to our delegation meeting with you on Tuesday. I continue to believe that we need a unified approach to solving the road home shortfall built upon the type of principles listed in my letter of several weeks ago (copy attached).

I look forward to our discussion along these lines.

Sincerely,



David Vitter
U.S. Senator

Cc: The Honorable Mary Landrieu
The Honorable Richard Baker
The Honorable Jim McCrery
The Honorable William Jefferson
The Honorable Rodney Alexander
The Honorable Bobby Jindal
The Honorable Charlie Melancon
The Honorable Charles Boustany
Senator Donald Hines
Representative Joe Salter
Senator Tom Schedler
Representative Jim Tucker
Dr. Norman Francis
Mr. Walter Isaacson
Mr. Walter Leger, Jr.
Mr. Sean Rielly
Mr. David Voelker

ACADIANA 800 LAFAYETTE STREET SUITE 1200 LAFAYETTE, LA 70501 (337) 262-6898 FAX: (337) 262-6373	CENTRAL LOUISIANA 2230 SOUTH MACARTHUR DRIVE SUITE 4 ALEXANDRIA, LA 71301 (318) 448-0169 FAX: (318) 448-0189	NORTHEAST LOUISIANA 1217 NORTH 19TH STREET MONROE, LA 71201 (318) 325-8120 FAX: (318) 325-9165	NORTHWEST LOUISIANA 920 PIERREMONT ROAD SUITE 113 SHREVEPORT, LA 71106 (318) 861-0437 FAX: (318) 861-4865	SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA 2800 VETERANS BOULEVARD SUITE 201 METAIRIE, LA 70002 (504) 589-2753 FAX: (504) 589-2607	SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA 3221 RYAN STREET SUITE E LAKE CHARLES, LA 70601 (337) 436-0453 FAX: (337) 436-3163
---	--	---	---	---	--

DAVID VITTER
LOUISIANA

DEPUTY WHIP

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Environment and Public Works

Foreign Relations

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Special Committee on Aging

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

WASHINGTON, D.C.
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE SH-518
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4623
FAX: (202) 228-5061

BATON ROUGE
858 CONVENTION STREET
BATON ROUGE, LA 70802
(225) 383-0331
FAX: (225) 383-0952
Website with E-Mail Access:
vitter.senate.gov

VIA FACSIMILE AND U.S. MAIL
IMMEDIATE ATTENTION REQUESTED

May 14, 2007

Honorable Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor, State of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

Senator Donald Hines
President of the Senate
P.O. Box 262
Bunkie, LA 71322

Representative Joe Salter
Speaker of the House
P. O. Box 250
Florien, LA 71429

Senator Tom Schedler
3840 Highway 22
Suite 200
Mandeville, LA 70471

Representative Jim Tucker
732 Behrman Highway
Suite C-2
Terrytown, LA 70056

Dr. Norman Francis
Chairman, LRA
150 Third Street, Suite 200
Baton Rouge, LA 70801

Dear Governor and Gentlemen:

I write to strongly encourage our cooperative development of a unified strategy to address the Road Home Program shortfall. I think doing so generally along the lines outlined below is absolutely essential for us to have any chance of success in solving this serious problem.

I don't want to dwell on the past. But it is important for us all to understand the mindset of most in Congress and the Bush Administration. From their perspective, prior to this completely unexpected shortfall announcement, the state had declared the Road Home Program absolutely fully funded by the federal taxpayer. And this was no small matter given that such a broad-based program to help compensate people for uninsured losses from a natural disaster was virtually unprecedented.

In this context, to now hear that a multi-billion dollar shortfall is fairly imminent—almost right upon us—is shocking and extremely frustrating. This is particularly true since work on the hurricane aspects of the supplemental appropriations bill—the natural vehicle to help address this shortfall at the federal level (if we had learned of the problem in time)—is generally considered closed.

ACADIANA 800 LAFAYETTE STREET SUITE 1200 LAFAYETTE, LA 70501 (337) 262-6898 FAX: (337) 262-6373	CENTRAL LOUISIANA 2230 SOUTH MACARTHUR DRIVE SUITE 4 ALEXANDRIA, LA 71301 (318) 448-0169 FAX: (318) 448-0189	NORTHEAST LOUISIANA 1217 NORTH 19TH STREET MONROE, LA 71201 (318) 325-8120 FAX: (318) 325-9165	NORTHWEST LOUISIANA 920 PIERREMONT ROAD SUITE 113 SHREVEPORT, LA 71106 (318) 861-0437 FAX: (318) 861-4865	SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA 2800 VETERANS BOULEVARD SUITE 201 METAIRIE, LA 70002 (504) 589-2753 FAX: (504) 589-2607	SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA 3221 RYAN STREET SUITE E LAKE CHARLES, LA 70601 (337) 438-0453 FAX: (337) 436-3163
---	--	---	---	---	--

Because of this, I think it is imperative that we come together within the state and develop a clear plan for solving this problem, rather than just rush back to Washington with another multi-billion dollar funding request.

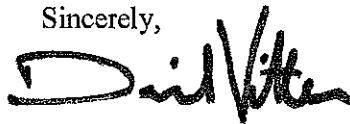
Specifically, I would suggest three absolutely necessary prongs to this unified approach:

1. We must immediately agree on and publicize the exact size of the problem as accurately as possible and explain and quantify any uncertainties in this estimate. This is in contrast to using overly aggressive or inflated figures. There is not yet acceptance in Washington that the figures which have been publicized are precise, accurate, or real. It is imperative that we are all accurate and on the same page regarding these numbers.
2. We must clearly and accurately explain the reasons for the shortfall and precisely when this problem was first identified. I believe it is imperative to do this not to point fingers but to have credibility with regard to a proposed solution.
3. Most importantly, we must take whatever substantive actions are possible at the state level during this state legislative session to solve as much of the problem there as possible—at a minimum, a sizable percentage of it. Some of you have identified very promising solutions in this regard. If leaders at the federal level are going to be any part of the solution, they absolutely want to see leadership and action at the state level first.

I hope these suggestions can be the starting point for such a unified approach. I would suggest that the Governor convene a conference call involving state leaders and the Congressional delegation to further explore these and other suggestions.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Vitter", with a stylized, cursive script.

David Vitter
U.S. Senator

cc: The Honorable Mary Landrieu
The Honorable Richard Baker
The Honorable Jim McCrery
The Honorable William Jefferson
The Honorable Rodney Alexander
The Honorable Bobby Jindal
The Honorable Charlie Melancon
The Honorable Charles Boustany

Mr. Walter Isaacson
Mr. Walter Leger, Jr.
Mr. Sean Reily
Mr. David Voelker